

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA**  
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY**

**Subject**

Out-of-County Business and Related Guidelines and Processes Purpose

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Purpose

To establish guidelines for expenses incurred for official business activities, procedures for claiming expense reimbursement, and outline related processes.

Background

Article XXVIa of the Administrative Code deals with the conduct of business outside the County and In-County expenses for meals, meetings, etc. This article further specifies approval requirements, expenditure guidelines, and reimbursement claim procedures. Additional clarification and procedures may be found in Administrative Manual Item 0200-1.

Policy

It is the Policy of the Board of Supervisors that County officers and employees will use due diligence in determining and evaluating the need for travel in carrying out the County's business needs. Each incidence of travel should be clearly justifiable, as to cost, value derived, and the number of individuals required to attend. Every effort should be made to assure that the key elements or results of any meetings, conferences, workshops, or other presentations while in a travel status are clearly communicated to those who will benefit from such events.

It is further the Policy of the Board that travel expenditures will be budgeted, monitored, and controlled pursuant to the rules adopted by the Board and as administered and directed by the Chief Administrative Officer and/or Chief Financial Officer, as appropriate. The Chief Administrative Officer will diligently assure that travel opportunities represent clear and cost-beneficial undertakings.

A. Guidelines

1. Prior approval, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 470 and further delineated in Administrative Manual Item 0200-1, must be obtained before any individual incurs an expense for which reimbursement is to be claimed.
2. Meal and lodging expenses for activities where only County staff are involved are discouraged. However, approval may be given if the circumstances make it either necessary or more convenient that the activity be held during mealtime and/or overnight. Refreshments may be provided to any person in the service of the County when such persons in performance of their duties are attending conferences or meetings, at which County business is conducted. The cost of

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the refreshments, including supplies such as cups, napkins, etc., shall not exceed the maximum established by Section 476 of the Administrative Code.

Reimbursement for such expenses shall be on an exceptional basis rather than a routine basis. In other words, meetings should be scheduled outside of meal periods whenever possible. Exceptions can be made only when it can be clearly demonstrated that the County will either directly or indirectly benefit from such expenses.

3. Section 504.1 and 504.2 of the County Administrative Code provides for reimbursement of expenses of Supervisors and their staff pursuant to specified duties. It is the policy of the Board of Supervisors that: Section 504.1 and 504.2 shall not authorize reimbursement for expense of meals attended only by a member of the Board of Supervisors and one or more members of the staff of such Board member.
4. When on official County business, employees/officials will not conduct out-of-County business at the expense of persons/companies doing or seeking to do business with the County. Specifically, transportation and related expenses associated with gaining knowledge about goods and services being offered by private persons or private entities doing business with the County shall be borne by the County. However, this provision may be waived by the Chief Administrative Officer if it is determined to be in the best interest of the County to do so. This provision shall not apply to transportation and related expenses paid as a normal part of a County contract for goods or services.
5. Lobbying activities by the Board of Supervisors, Chief Administrative Officer, or specifically designated representatives shall be governed in accordance with Sections 370, 371, and 372 of the Administrative Code.
6. Whenever possible, multiple attendees at the same out-of-County business activity should be discouraged. The preferred action is for one person to return with the benefits of the trip and to share them with other County employees. Travel to legislative functions for the purpose of forging legislation or expressing a Countywide perspective are exempt from this restriction.
7. Whenever possible, training should be obtained locally. The preferred action is to seek, encourage, and use local sources of information. Training at out-of-State locations should be minimized.
8. Whenever possible, a department head and assistant department head should not travel to the same out-of-County business activity.

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9. Specific approval must be obtained from the Board of Supervisors for travel to destinations outside the continental United States. Incidental business travel to Mexico is exempt from this restriction and should be budgeted.

**B. Unusual Costs**

Unusual costs in excess of those "normal maximums" specified in Administrative Code Section 472 will be considered for reimbursement only if substantiated by a logical explanation in accordance with the guidelines provided by Administrative Code Section 472.1. Claims not falling clearly within these guidelines must be submitted to the Chief Administrative Officer or Chief Financial Officer for discretionary review and approval.

Sunset Date

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by 12-31-2013.

Board Action

12-12-89 (49)  
01-30-90 (44)  
06-12-90 (108)  
05-17-94 (29)  
12-14-94 (11)  
02-27-2001 (22)  
02-27-2007 (9)

CAO Reference

1. Chief Administrative Officer
2. Auditor and Controller